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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 DHA-02 IO-13 OMB-01 /072 W
----------020743Z 032679 /17
R 020615Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY MBABANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1958
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MBABANE 1453

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR, SHUM, WZ
SUBJECT: DETENTION AND INTERROGATION OF SWAZILAND CITIZEN
NORMAN B. TSHABALALA

1. ON APRIL 2, 1977 NORMAN B. TSHABALALA, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF BRITISH PETROLEUM (BP) SWAZILAND, WAS DETAINED AS HE ATTEMPTED TO CROSS INTO RSA AT THE OSHOEK BORDER GATE. TSHABALALA WAS WELL TREATED AND LIGHTLY QUESTIONED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS. HE WAS RELEASED ON APRIL 14, 1977. GOS HAS NOT MADE ANY FORMAL COMMENT OR PROTEST AS YET.

2. IN INTERVIEW WITH EMBOFF, TSHABALALA CLAIMED TO BE MYSTIFIED AS TO THE REASONS FOR HIS DETENTION. THE SAP JUSTIFICATION THAT TSHABALALA WAS CONVEYING SOWETO CHILDREN INTO SWAZILAND AND THAT HE WAS ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN ANC ACTIVITY WAS PATENTLY ABSURD. COMMENT: TSHABALALA HAS A SURPRISING RANGE OF CONTACTS BOTH IN SWAZILAND AND RSO CONFIDENTIAL

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INCLUDING NELSON MANDELA, WHOM HE KNEW IN THE 1940S, AND OLIVER TAMBO. HOWEVER, CONTACTS IN SWAZILAND CONFIRM TSHABALALA'S CLAIM THAT HE HAS NOT BEEN ACTIVE IN UNDER GROUND ACTIVITIES IN SWAZILAND IN RECENT YEARS, IF EVER. END COMMENT.

3. THE KEY TO TSHABALALA' DETENTION, AND SUBSEQUENT

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GENTLE TREATMENT PROBABABLY LIES IN AN AREA THAT HE
CONSIDERED TO BE OF SO LITTLE IMPORTANCE THAT HE
FAILED TO MENTION IT IN THE INTERVIEW WITH EMBOFF.

4. IN AN AFFIDAVIT PREPARED FOR GOS AND BING POUCHED
TO ADDRESSEES, TSHABALALA STATED THAT ON TWO SEPARATE
OCCASIONS HE WAS PRODDED TO ARRANGE A MEETING BETWEEN
RSA SECURITY OFFICIALS AND HIS COUSIN, ENOCH R.
TSHABALALA, THE NEWLY APPOINTED HEAD OF GOS SPECIAL
BRANCH. COMMENT: THE WHOLE INTERROGATION OF TSHABALALA
WAS A FARCE -- THE SOUTH AFRICANS GAVE OUT FAR MORE
"INFORMATION" (SOME OF IT FALSE) THAN THEY RECEIVED AND
DIDN'T PRESS VERY HARD FOR MORE. THEIR SUGGESTIONS
THAT TSHABALALA SHOULD SUPPLY THEM WITH INFORMATION
WAS ALMOST LUDICROUS, THEIR ALLEGATIONS WITHOUT FOUNDATION.

5. THE PREVIOUS HEAD OF THE SPECIAL BRANCH, DAVID HOGAN,
WAS LONG RUMORED TO BE A BOSS AGENT, WHICH REMAINS
UNPROVEN. HOWEVER, HOGAN DID HAVE A CLOSE WORKING
RELATIONSHIP WITH RSA POLICE AND SECURITY FORCES (PERHAPS
TOO CLOSE -- WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN A FACTOR IN HIS SUDDENLY
BEING FIRED). WITH HOGAN GONE THE SOUTH AFRICANS HAVE LOST
A VALUABLE CONTACT IN SWAZILAND.

6. ENOCH R. TSHABALALA, AS A SWAZI, IS FAR LESS LIKELY
TO GIVE CLOSE COOPERATION TO THE SOUTH AFRICANS. THE
DETENTION OF NORMAN TSHABALALA WAS ALMOST UNDOUBTEDLY AN
ATTEMPT TO PRESSURE E.R. TSHABALALA TO OPEN LINES OF
CONTACT WITH SOUTH AFRICA BY SHOWING HIM WHAT CAN HAPPEN
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TO HIS RELATIVES IF HE FAILS TO COOPERATE.

7. IF THIS LINE OF REASONING IS CORRECT, IT SHOWS
IMPORTANCE SAG PLACES ON HAVING FRIENDLY AND COOPERATIVE
REGIME IN SWAZILAND, AND THE LENGTHS THEY WILL GO TO ASSURE
COOPERATION.
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